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### Witness Testimony

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, I went into Wilson Health in Sidney, Ohio for a bariatric surgery. Before my surgery, I had to take a rapid Covid test. It came back negative. The surgery was performed as normal. I woke up five hours later in discomfort, but everything seemed normal. The next day, I had to do a swallow test to make sure everything was working properly. All tests appeared to pass. Throughout the day, I was instructed to drink 32 ounces of water before I could be discharged. I was having trouble accomplishing that goal. At about 6:00 pm, I had only drunk about 2 ½ ounces. The surgeon did not want me to go home until I could drink enough. Fast forward to the middle of the night, I do not remember this, but was told I had a coughing fit and aspirated fluid into my lungs. I was rushed into emergency surgery where the surgeon had to clean out my abdomen, which had overflowed with bile and other stomach contents. I was placed on a ventilator, and I have no recollection of this. The issue ended up being that I had a kinked intestine, which caused a backup and burst my sutures in my stomach.

A few days go by and I'm not getting better, my oxygen is still low. My wife asked a friend of ours, who is a doctor, for advice. He recommended I get tested for Covid again. This time, it came back positive. Since Wilson Health was a smaller hospital without a dedicated ICU doctor, my wife transferred me to Kettering Medical Center. Unbeknownst to her, they had a no visitor policy which prevented her nor anyone else to visit while I was there. I was out of it until the very beginning of January, and when I came to, I could not see nor move. My glasses were at home, and my legs and arms weren't working. I was scared and alone. I would see a nurse or a doctor every once in a while, but I was too confused to understand what was going on. I was having trouble discerning what was real and what was fake. I had a tube in my neck and tubes coming out of my body, but no one explained what was happening to me. I would go in and out of consciousness due to pain medications, so I could not tell the time, date, day, night, etc.

To add to my inability to determine real versus fake, I was told that the Cleveland Browns made the playoffs. I am a huge Cleveland Browns fan, but I could not accept that they were good enough to make the playoffs. I knew that they played on Sundays, so I knew the game would be a week away. In my mind, every time I went to sleep and woke back up, it was a new day. I was confused when, what I thought seven days had passed, the Browns weren't playing. This added to my thought that nothing was real.

As time went on, my wife was able to visit and bring in my glasses for an hour. I was incredibly grateful for that and did not want her to leave. I broke down when I knew she was leaving because I didn't know when I would see her again. The nurse offered to FaceTime my family, and I took advantage of it a couple times. I denied it a few times as well because it made me sad not to see them in real life.

I was transferred to an LTAC called Pam in early February. Even though it was a different hospital, it was part of the Kettering Health Network, so the no visitor policy was still in effect. While there, my wife fought hard, and eventually was able to get once a week visits. There was a clock on my wall, so I could at least see the time. I would wait patiently until the day came that I could see her. I would count down the hours until she would get there. I felt alive when she was there. After she left though, I would get into a deep depression and break down until I could see her again. This went on for about a month. Once the visits started happening weekly, I felt myself, and my wife agrees, vastly improve.

I am grateful to Kettering for keeping me alive. They did their job well. However, I feel that not having family visits or having someone to advocate for me, caused irreparable damage. I woke up having bed sores on my bottom and my head from lack of being turned. Also, my legs and arms weren't working due to not getting up and being moved. I know that if my wife was allowed to visit, she would have brought up these topics and would have made sure that I was taken care of properly.

In conclusion, I spent 94 days in the hospital with 39 days being on the ventilator. I left the hospital on March 5<sup>th</sup>, barely being able to sit up, no walking, and couldn't move my right arm. It has been 13 months since my original surgery. I can walk short amounts with the assistance of a rolling walker. I still have tremor in my hands and legs. I haven't worked since November 2020. Even though I am making good progress, I still have a long road ahead of me. While it was my decision to get the surgery, it was not my idea to be secluded from my family for that long. I hope my testimony shines light on how this policy affects people long term. Thank you for your time.